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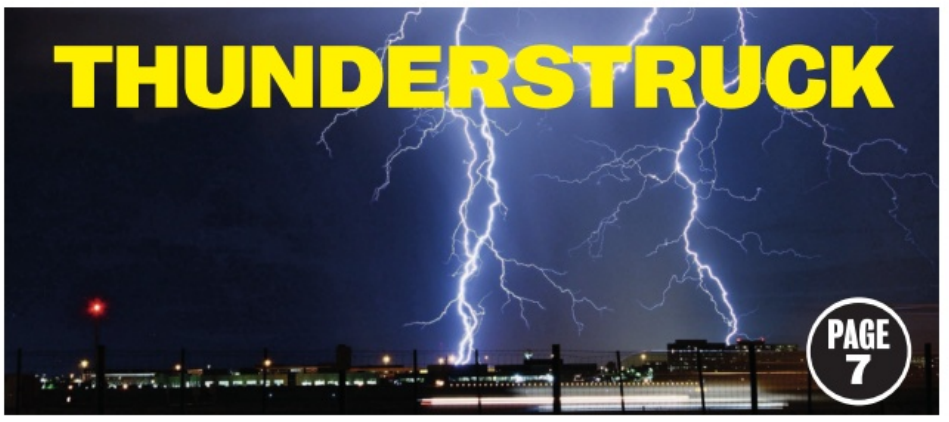
Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 32 | Min 21 | Humidity 57% Thunderstorm Sensex 58,338 | Nifty 17,475 | Gold 52,991 | Silver 69,100 | Dollar 76.32 | Euro 82.49 | GBP 99.73



Citizens allege Smart City work destroying wetland inside Cubbon Park near bamboo grove. 'Earthmovers brought in and large portion of wetland dug out'

EBB & FLOW

Park a massive catchment area in Central Bengaluru

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Smart City work in Cubbon Park has not gone down well with admirers of one of the largest lung spaces in Bengaluru. They said Bengaluru Smart City Limited (BSCL) is destroying a major wetland there and depleting the park's water balance and biodiversity.

Citizens had repeatedly requested Smart City not to make changes to the wetland as it plays a critical role in maintaining natural cycles and sustaining biodiversity. According to them, the wetland has been dug up and is being destroyed near the bamboo grove in the park.

The wetland in question is one of the oldest, where wild flora were thriving for decades. A recent letter from members of We Love Cubbon Park, Environment Support Group, experts and citizens to BSCL managing director Rajendra Cholan, stressed it was earlier notified to the Smart City that the area should be left alone.

The letter stated that earthmovers were brought into the wetland area, a new channel was dug up and markings were made. A large portion of the wetland was dug out and a simple bridge which was supposed to be made, became a large concretised silt trap, according to the letter. The letter also pointed out that according to BSCL, the large tank pits were to raise the pathway to six feet wide, while the necessity of it hadn't been explained.

> "As the whole world is collapsing in the fallout of the climate crisis, existing waterbodies should be preserved. Let the park be there by itself. – Suresh Heblikar, environmentalist

Citizens said there was a need to carry out a hydrology study, though it hadn't been done by BSCL. However, professor of civil engineering at University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE), Dr Inayathulla M and a few students were introduced by the citizens to BSCL to carry out a hydrology report. A subsequent preliminary report carried out by the professor and students found there is a large amount of water runoff during the rainy season and the park provides a huge opportunity to act as a massive catchment area in Central Bengaluru.

The report also recommended a survey on pumping test of open wells and bore wells, water quality analysis, infiltration test, resistivity survey along with sieve analysis of soil and quality to be provided at a cost of Rs 4,00,000. However, a further detailed study is yet to be approved.

"They are going ahead with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

The flex capacity

Hoardings obstructing traffic signals; some may dislodge in strong winds, posing threat to commuters

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Unauthorised hoardings and flex boards that have been banned across the city are sprouting back on roads posing a threat to commuters, according to Bangalore Traffic Police (BTP).

"Many hoardings and flexes are blocking traffic signal views and road signages. Some of them are posing danger to commuters, especially during strong winds, as flex boards dislodge from electric poles, street lights, pillars of flyovers and Metro. Citizens on the move are at risk of falling flex boards," a senior police officer said.

Especially with elections round the corner and businesses picking up after covid-related relaxations, BTP personnel have been observing a spurt in illegal advertisement hoardings and flex boards that appear all of a sudden as they report to work.

"More and more of these hoardings and flex boards are coming up during the night-times and go unchecked while the actual work is carried out," said a senior traffic police officer.

BTP personnel have been observing a large number of flex boards erected by local leaders and politicians mushrooming on various corridors, for instance the Bengaluru International Airport Road

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 »

3 THINGS TO DO

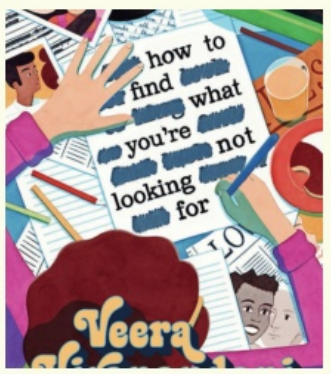
01 On a spiritual note

In collaboration with The Kabir Project, a series of presentations, 'Thinking With Kabir and Other Mystics', will explore the spiritual songs of saint-poets like Kabir, Bulleh Shah, Meerabai, and Shah Latif from the folk oral traditions of India. Sunday's presentation, 'Aari Gagan Maa', will reflect on the borderless quality of the sky, and the politics of play and possibility that these poems hint at.
Where: Ranga Shankara
When: April 17, 5.30 pm - 6.30 pm
Entry: Free, 080 2649 3982

02 For the love of drama

Tamaasha Theatre, one of Mumbai's leading theatre companies, will be presenting their new show 'Same Same But Different'. Two talented performers from different backgrounds, different life experiences, facing different artistic and social challenges, yet bound together by their love for music, come together to share their life stories with searing honesty, humour and emotion. Same Same but Different is a treat for the mind, and the heart! **When and where: BIC, (April 17, 11.30 am free entry) Vyoma, (April 17, 7 pm, ticketed, bookmyshow.com)**

03 Lit talk



Renowned Indian-American author Veera Hiranandani in her new book 'How to find what you're not looking for' deals with interfaith and inter-racial marriage: its history in the US, and people's struggles with it. The book also explores antisemitism and prejudice. During her session at the NLF Reading challenge 2022, Veera will interact with her readers on how middle schooler Ariel struggles with dysgraphia and confronts the prejudice of those who are closest to her.
Where: Online; When: April 18, 5.30 pm
Register: neevliteraturefestival.org

United in our faith
Devotees crowd in front of Dharmaraya Swami Temple during Kapoora Pooja on the occasion of Karaga, one of the oldest festivals in the state. The Karaga Shakthyotsava rituals were performed at midnight on Saturday, in Bengaluru

'Tis the season of coughs and colds, say doctors

There's a sudden surge in cases of allergic and seasonal bronchitis in the city; health experts suggest avoiding pollution and staying alert

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As schools, offices and theatres trudge back to a pre-pandemic reality, doctors from hospitals across the city are reporting a rise in viral, allergic and seasonal bronchitis. Though the cases are not alarming, they say that it's unusual for such cases to appear during this time.

An increasing number of patients are visiting hospitals complaining of cough, common cold and wheezing in some cases as well. While most cases are just mild and are being treated with antibiotics, doctors are unable to pinpoint the exact reason for this rise. After the third wave of Covid, there was a dip in such cases and during the third wave, most patients reported symptoms of cold and cough were associated with Omicron cases. For the past weeks, doctors are seeing a small surge in cases.

"There is an upsurge in seasonal, allergic and viral bronchitis. We are seeing around 3-4 patients per day. Most patients are presenting symptoms of a common cold, predominantly dry cough, audible wheezing and breathing difficulty in some cases. Symptoms are worsening in the patients with comorbidities but in most cases, it's not serious. But due to the weather conditions, we could expect a surge in the coming days," said Dr Aditya S Chowti, Senior Consultant - Internal Medicine, Fortis Hospital.

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

Masking up will keep not just covid at bay; but help prevent bronchitis and other allergies especially in polluted areas

> **"Most patients are presenting symptoms of a common cold, predominantly dry cough, audible wheezing and breathing difficulty in some cases**
> – Dr Aditya S Chowti, Senior Consultant - Internal Medicine, Fortis Hospital

According to Dr Pavan Yadav, Lead Consultant - Interventional Pulmonology and Lung Transplantation, Aster RV Hospital, usually, patients used to only complain of discomfort during the winter season but this year, patients are complaining during summer also. He said that they were seeing seven - eight patients daily with headaches, running nose, cough and breathing issues. Patients with lung-related comorbidities have a risk of infection, he added.

"After Covid, there has been a rise in patients complaining about allergy problems. Even patients who had Covid once are also reporting allergy symptoms. A child who had Covid earlier landed in an emergency after an asthma attack," said Dr Sachin Kumar, Senior Consultant, Pulmonology and Critical Care Medicine, Sakra World Hospital.

Doctors feel that uptick could be due to the relaxations in social and work circles leading to sudden exposure to other viruses and pollution. With citizens masked up for the past two years, the intensity of the exposure along with Covid had lessened.

Doctors also feel that improper usage of masks could also be the reason for this uptick. Either people are not strictly wearing masks or the prolonged usage of masks could be one of the reasons according to docs.

"Throwing masks all around the place and multiple reuses of masks without washing could be a factor in these cases. Post third wave, there is an alarming lack of hygiene," added Dr Chowti. Medical experts conclude that people should continue following Covid-appropriate behaviour like wearing masks, regular sanitisation and social distancing.

Docs advise patients with symptoms to not wait for the symptoms to worsen before seeking medical help. They also advise avoiding polluted places and exposure to smoke that could trigger the symptoms.

"Post Covid, there is a larger awareness about adult vaccination and people in the elderly age group and with chronic lung diseases should consider getting vaccinations against flu and pneumonia infections," added Yadav.

Wild airports: How illegal animal trade takes off

Report reveals that over 70,000 native & exotic wild animals were seized in 140 wildlife trafficking cases at 18 Indian airports between 2011-2020

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Many airports in the country including Bengaluru have been witnessing seizure of wildlife. For example, we keep hearing about star tortoises being illegally exported or seized at the airport. A latest report states that Indian Star Tortoise has been listed as "vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List. However, traffickers clearly disregard the threatened status and international CITES rules prohibit its trade. Indian Star Tortoise was the highest number of native species recovered between 2011-2020.

A latest report from TRAFFIC on High flying-Insight into wildlife trafficking through India's airports found the trafficking of over 70,000 native and exotic wild animals, including their body parts or derivatives (weighing around 4,000kg) in 140 wildlife seizure incidents at 18 Indian airports between 2011-2020. Among the species seized (including both Indian and exotic ones), reptiles were the most encountered group during the study period (46 per cent), followed by mammals (18 per cent), timber (13 per cent), and species from the marine environment (10 per cent).

The highest number of native species seized included the Indian Star Tortoise, followed by the Black Pond Turtle Geoclemys hamiltonii.

According to a study, Indian Star Tortoise was the species most trafficked and recovered between 2011-2020

The highest number of non-native species seized, Red-Eared Slider Turtle, is followed by the Chinese Pond Turtle Mauremys reevesii.

According to the report, while the unprecedented growth of the airline sectors has facilitated the smooth transit of individuals and goods across the globe, it is also being exploited by traffickers to move illegal wildlife products speedily and with significantly fewer transit losses. Several flora species, including Agarwood Aquilaria malaccensis, Red Sanders Pterocarpus santalinus, Sandalwood Santalum album, and medicinal and aromatic plants (MAP) like Kuth Saussurea costus roots were seized at the airports, the report adds.

> **"Unprecedented growth of the airline sector is being exploited by traffickers** –From the report

It says that in the category of non-native species, seizure of Red-eared Slider Turtle was reported in the highest number of seizure incidents, over six per cent of the total cases. "Most number of live animals of exotic origin reported in seizure incidences, with 65 per cent of the total number of wildlife and derivatives seized during the observed period. Chinese Pond Turtle Mauremys reevesii were reported as the second highest number of live animals of exotic origin seized. The species identified in the wildlife seizure incidents during the study period had their native range throughout the world, reflecting on the international scale of the trade with a majority of these species being native to Asia, of which more than half are found in India.

Species with their native range in South America, Africa, Australia, North America and Europe have also been recorded in seizure incidents at India's airports during the study period.

According to the report, the analysis of seizure incidents reported during the observed period showed the following transit methods being used to evade enforcement agencies while trafficking wildlife. "Trafficking through checked luggage and personal baggage, concealment of wildlife contraband within passenger clothing, footwear, and other wearables and wrong declaration of protected species", the report highlighted. Though the highest seizures were reported from Chennai, Mumbai and Delhi, Bengaluru was recorded in the category of 6-10 seizures.

Victim alleges 'harassment' after filing rape case

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A woman who is fighting a sexual assault case alleges that she is being harassed by her perpetrator and his friend in collusion with the Whitefield CEN police who had taken up a case against her under section 67-A of the Information Technology Act. A female friend of the accused had allegedly asked her to show proof of the latter's relationship with the accused to which she shared a picture of her wearing a nightgown.

Later, the woman filed a complaint against the survivor under section 67-A of the Information Technology Act, which is punishment for publishing or transmitting of material containing sexually explicit act, etc, in electronic form. Survivor, Smitha (name changed), alleged that the FIR registered against her by the Whitefield CEN police is a sheer misuse of police power as section 67-A. "It's a woman who is forwarding her photograph to another woman and it can't be termed as publishing or transmitting of material containing sexually explicit act unless both of them are lesbians," Smitha says.

She told Bangalore Mirror: "Despite clear instructions from the Supreme Court to use the above mentioned section discreetly as modesty of women is involved, the Bengaluru police colluding with the accused party has slapped a case on me to harass me for filing a case of sexual assault and cheating against the man."

> **"The police harassing me by sending notices and demanding me to hand over my phone which is vital evidence in my case against the accused** – Victim

Explaining her stand, Smitha said, "One woman, a resident of Bengaluru, was also cheated by the same person as I. I contacted her to find out the truth. During our first interaction, I had shared some pictures and screenshots of my chats with the man upon her demand to see proof of my relationship," Smitha said.

In June 2021, Smitha filed a complaint of sexual assault, cheating and criminal intimidation against the man at the Coimbatore All-Women police station.

Soon after a case was registered against him, a female friend of the accused filed a complaint against Smitha with the Whitefield CEN police station stating that she had shared sexually explicit pictures to her.

"The Whitefield CEN police are harassing me by sending notices and demanding me to hand over my phone which is vital evidence in the case that I have registered against the man," Smitha said.

A senior police officer from the Whitefield CEN police station confirmed that they received a complaint against the Coimbatore-based woman who have been sending sexually explicit content to a person in Bengaluru. "We have issued notices to her to appear before us for statement recording," the officer added.

Background of case

In June 2021, the Central All Women Police in Coimbatore had booked a Chief Technical Officer (CTO) of a Chennai-based microfinance firm, for sexually assaulting a 48-year-old woman, a resident of Coimbatore.

The police had identified the accused as a resident of Mogappair East in Chennai who befriended the woman who is a single parent of her three children.

FAKE NEWS BUSTER MIRROR

COVID A VIRUS, NOT SNAKE VENOM

THE CLAIMS

A post that got viral on social media claims that covid-19 is not a virus, but snake venoms being used to poison people or turn them into satanic hybrids. The conspiracy theory is backed by an international "short documentary" that went viral, that also claims that human bodies produce antibodies which are anti-venom and that a vaccine was being administered to disable the antibodies.

SO, WHAT'S THE TRUTH?

Experts have rubbished the claim, stating that the genetic sequences of the virus have been examined by global scientists who have confirmed the identification of covid-19 as a SARS-Cov-2 type infectious virus.

While anti-venom contains monoclonal antibodies to boost the immune system of the person bitten by a snake, it's not the same product or treatment as for covid-19, they say. Scientists say that there is no evidence to support the conspiracy theory.

BUST FAKE NEWS WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's separate the news from the noise, Bengaluru. Tell us about that incredible-sounding story/news/alert that you've received on WhatsApp or social media and Bangalore Mirror researchers and editors will see if it checks out. If it doesn't, we'll call it out

TOPCOMMENTS

Negligence of authorities led to flash flood

Commenting on our story – Less rain, but woes plenty – reporting how a mild spell of rain created havoc in the low-lying areas of the city, readers are questioning authorities for turning a deaf ear to the civic woes. Anil B says that it is utter negligence of the civic authorities. Until people are not sent to jail, they won't stop, he exclaims. The reader says that they have no fear of the law or the common people. Meanwhile, a Twitter user who goes by the username TKO has turned the spotlight on the media. He asks why the media can't ask "tough questions" to the government and bureaucrats.

WEBHITS

3 most-read articles on the Mirror site

- Bengaluru to Mysuru on an expressway
- Plan your happy home on Doddaballapur Road
- Malleswaram Mirror Special: Smart road turns into pools

WATER WASTE

Of 1,265 MLD, most treated, reusable wastewater in Bengaluru goes to waste; experts say this can change, study suggests ways

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Bengaluru generates around 2,000 MLD of wastewater each day, of which 735 MLD goes untreated and 1,265 MLD is treated in centralised and decentralised sewage treatment plants (STPs). Most of the treated water doesn't get used and is discharged into stormwater channels, stated a study conducted by Centre for Social and Environmental Innovation (CSEI), Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (ATREE). Experts said, this wastewater can, instead, be put to many uses (other than drinking).

"It's estimated that almost 40 per cent of the freshwater in the city is used for non-potable purposes and can easily be replaced by (unused) treated wastewater. The reuse purpose should be determined based on the quality of the reclaimed water. For example, reclaimed water of very high quality can be used for construction purposes. Water of lower quality, still complying with the pollution control board's standards, can be used for greening public spaces," said Shreya Nath, director of Cities and Towns, CSEI.

Further, the study highlights: While the city has a large number of apartment-scale STPs, gated communities are unable to comply with the mandate of 100 per cent wastewater reuse.

Urban local bodies have been promoting decentralised sewage treatment to build typologies that house large populations like multistorey apartments and commercial complexes to help bridge the sewage gap in cities.

"We conducted interviews with resident welfare associations of 20 apartment complexes to get a better understanding and overview of the ground reality. We found that almost 50 per cent of the apartment complexes did not comply with the Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) mandate," said Nath.

Experts suggest treated wastewater can be used to greenify public spaces

> **"It's estimated that almost 40 per cent of the freshwater in the city is used for non-potable purposes and can be replaced by (unused) treated wastewater**
>
> –Shreya Nath, CSEI

ZLD is a water treatment process, dating back to the '70s, where all water is recovered and contaminants are reduced to solid waste.

The interviews revealed smaller apartment complexes with less than 50 units found it particularly difficult to utilise excess treated wastewater due to low demand.

"Wastewater treatment at a smaller scale tends to generate very high operation and maintenance costs. Therefore, the systems are usually not well maintained. Capital investment is another big factor... Mechanical equipment such as blowers and pumps associated with treatment systems for a 50 KLD plant versus a 500 KLD is not very different, but the access to the capital investment based on the unit sales for different plants is very different. So, the smaller plants are often under-designed," said Sneha Singh, the urban water management lead at CSEI.

Bangalore Mirror

Despite BBMP directive mandating use of treated wastewater for all construction purposes, only a fraction of BWSSB's recycled water is sold

NOT WOKE ON WATER

Board recycling 973 MLD of wastewater

On Feb 21 BM reported: BBMP is finding it hard to sell recycled wastewater

As per the study, a viable way to reuse the wastewater in the city can be found in the construction industry.

In 2019, Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) mandated the use of treated wastewater from decentralised STPs for construction. Despite this, most builders and architects are hesitant to reuse the water for construction.

According to Singh, the key to using reclaimed water in the construction industry is to establish a baseline of the quality of water required for safe reuse. The next steps would be to find high quality water and set up good monitoring protocols and a robust transportation network.

"Once the baseline is established it will go a long way in building trust in wastewater safety, which is a concern among new homebuyers. We have partnered with two start-ups that aim to bridge these gaps and focus on water quality and quantity monitoring. We are looking at creating a live interface that links buyers and sellers and facilitates wastewater transportation," said Nath.

'Smart City depleting park wetland'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

plans unknown to us. The wetland shouldn't have been touched. They told me they would share work blueprints but it wasn't done. We were called for meetings so as to share our views. But our suggestions are not taken into consideration. They were supposed to conduct a detailed hydrology report to study water balance; this hadn't been initiated. Cubbon Park is one of the most beautiful spaces. We do not need further development work in the park; if they want to change something, maybe they can look into maintenance of the park and provide disabled friendly toilets and walkways," said Gautham Krishnan of We Love Cubbon Park.

Another member Sunita Kumar said, "They have made a bridge, and altered the look of the area. They have raised the bridges and built arches which were not required. A simple bridge would have been sufficient. Maybe after the rains, plants would grow again here as it is a natural wetland."

Expert view

Environmentalist Suresh Heblikar said as we are a tropical country, waterbodies are critical. "Natural wetlands sustain rich biodiversity. The wetlands in Cubbon Park are the most important component of its biodiversity. A wetland acts as a filtering system. It filters all the waste water. For the hydrological system of Cubbon Park to be functional, it has to have wetlands. Cubbon Park and Lalbagh have natural wetlands; we should preserve them. As the whole world is collapsing in the fallout of the climate emergency, existing water bodies should be preserved at any cost. Let the park be there by itself."

> **"As the whole world is collapsing in the fallout of the climate emergency, existing water bodies should be preserved at any cost**
>
> – Suresh Heblikar , environmentalist

What BSCL said

Meanwhile, an assistant executive engineer working on the Cubbon Park project of BSCL said the bridge was based on a proposal of Cubbon Park Walkers' Association, for a foot bridge. "We have made a vent for the flow of water and revetment. We have placed the soil and made a pathway. The earlier bridge was obstructing the flow of water; the silt had blocked the water way and the water would flow towards the lotus pond and then to the Bal Bhavan area. We are not destroying the wetland in any way. We are just making a way for the flow of water. We are even getting treated waste water from Metro; it will recharge the lotus pond. We are in fact raising the water table," the engineer added.

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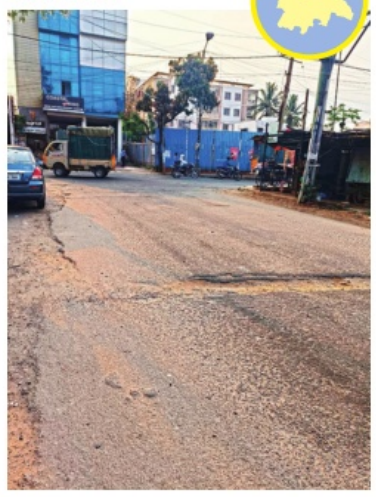
Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Fix the stretch

Jalahalli



The Jalahalli Cross road is lying in a dilapidated condition, with craters formed across the stretch. Vehicle suspension for all automobiles will be damaged by such road conditions.

Lethal danger

Subramanyapura

A transformer near Acura Diagnostic Centre opposite Gowdanapalya bus stop at Telecom Layout on Subramanyapura Road is lying in a sorry state. People have dumped debris around the transformer. It may explode any time. BESCOM officials must address the issue.

Dangerous turn

RT Nagar

A blind turn without any traffic sign near a school on 12th Cross Road, 1st Block in RT Nagar is posing danger to commuters and pedestrians. The issue must be fixed as soon as possible.

CAPSIZED
Rafters in shock

Demand to regulate rafting with strict safety protocol

Cops inspecting the site where a boat carrying 12 rafters capsized recently

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Adventure lovers in the city are rattled about the incident where a raft capsized near Ganesh Gudi (closer to Dandeli, Uttara Kannada district) with 12 people, who had a narrow escape during white water rafting. There is increased demand to regulate rafting as well as to increase safety features. For Bengalureans who want to do river rafting, there are a few options available. The most popular among them being Dubare (Kodagu district) as well as Kali river rafting (Uttara Kannada district). However, there have been many protocol breaches in recent times which have raised concern over safety. A few days ago, 12 people were sitting in the raft near Dandeli though the maximum capacity allowed is six to eight.

Sneha Kumari, an adventure sport enthusiast, said, river rafting is one of the most popular activities among many. "People had to go to northern Indian towns like Rishikesh to enjoy rafting. As rafting can be risky if proper care is not taken, the State Government or the respective district administrations have to take utmost care in ensuring that all the safety protocols are followed," she said. After the incident of overcrowding in a raft emerged, she wonders why the local authorities are silent on the incident. "These kinds of incidents could have been happening for a long time but it came to light only now because of the incident or else it could have gone unnoticed," she said.

Sharan S, another adventure enthusiast from the city said, the hobby is quite expensive as people have to travel all the way from Bengaluru to enjoy it. "If despite spending thousands of rupees there is no guarantee on safety, then it definitely causes concern," he said.

> **"River rafting is one of the most popular pastime activities. Many had to go to northern Indian towns like Rishikesh or the places to enjoy the rafting.**

It may be noted that in 2018, Kodagu Deputy Commissioner had banned rafting in Kodagu after a tourist from Hyderabad got into an argument with an organiser in Dubare and was subsequently killed in the ensuing altercation.

Later, during a probe, it was found that many organisers had submitted fake documents to the DC and there was no match between the permission letters and the letter submitted. This meant that illegal river rafting has been taking place in Kodagu for a long time. To avoid such illegal activities, the DC had earlier come up with a strict order to ban rafting in various places across Kodagu.

Before the ban, water rafting would be an all-year programme in Kodagu. In summer, when the water level was low, the organisers would conduct plain river rafting. However, when the water is in full spate after monsoon, the organisers would conduct white water rafting.

Later, rafting was permitted in Kodagu after many guidelines were imposed. Currently, rafting must start only at a common point in Dubare (earlier it was being held from several). Permission process for raft owners has also been made stringent. Currently, each owner has been asked to get a no objection certificate from a local panchayat, fire and emergency services department, Public Works, Ports and Inland Water Transport Department, certificate for raft instructor and a registration in labour department. The officials from the Kodagu district administration claim that they are regularly monitoring the water rafting activities.

Rain may continue for next three to four days

The City received heavy rainfall for the third consecutive day on Saturday. Water logging was reported from many areas. In Chickpet, one of the city's busiest business hubs, the main roads saw water collect up to knee-lenghth and many vehicles were submerged.

Sajjan Raj Mehta, a trade activist, said, "Many vehicles were seen under the water in Sultanpet near Chickpet Metro station. This is the result of poor drainage system."

Meanwhile, there is no respite from rainfall as the Met department has said that rains are expected for the next few days as well. The city recorded a maximum of 33 degree Celsius and a minimum of 21.9 degree Celsius. Rain is expected for the next three to four days. The temperature is likely to stay around 33 degree Celsius.

On Saturday, many areas reported waterlogging. Rain water gushed into the 150 houses located near Hemavathi Road, Lakshmaiah Layout near Uttarahalli. —BMB

Newspaper boy dies in accident

In a tragic incident, a newspaper distributor was mowed down by a tractor at Bhogenahalli Road near Panathur Main Road on Saturday. The victim has been identified as Piyush Sharma R. Piyush, a Class 10 student, was on his way distributing newspapers on his cycle when the accident happened. The tractor came from behind and knocked him down. Piyush was grievously injured and died at hospital in the afternoon.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

UPWARD TRAJECTORY

This picture was taken during my visit to the famous Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Karnataka

The picture was clicked by reader **Kedar Naik**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com**

A tale of two panchayats

Junction between Sarjapur, Chandapura Road is a civic nightmare, complain residents; authorities only busy playing the blame game

Shreyashi Mukherjee
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bengalureans residing in the junction between Sarjapur and Chandapura Road bearing the brunt of the blame game between the Dommasandra and the Kodathi panchayat authorities. The uneven road as well as the illegally strewn garbage is a major cause for concern for residents, but authorities are only interested in shirking off their responsibilities.

The commuters say that the road leading towards Chandapura was initially riddled with potholes. After a lot of complaints, the authorities cemented the road. However, residents complain that the work was not done properly.

A resident of the area, on the condition of anonymity, said, "They just poured the cement and vanished. Even after that, the road remained uneven. It seemed as if they wanted to get done with the work in a hurry. The other roads are well-maintained in the area; it is only this road which is so poorly done."

The residents also say that one portion of the road was filled with dumped waste. When they tried to complain to the Dommasandra panchayat, they replied that the particular side of the road was not under their jurisdiction. They said that it was under the jurisdiction of Kodathi panchayat; hence, they would not clean the area. In addition to that, some of the people burn the garbage which mostly consists of plastic waste, releasing toxic fumes.

Aradhya K, a resident of the area, said, "It is becoming extremely difficult to stay in this area because of the smoke that emanates because of the burning waste. There is no one who we can share our problems with, and no one is there to even solve the problems that we are facing."

"It is becoming extremely difficult to stay in this area because of the smoke that emanates from burning waste – Aradhya K, a resident

The residents lament the fact that there is no particular authority that is willing to take the onus of doing the job properly. "The panchayat keeps saying that the area is not under their jurisdiction, and so, no one will take responsibility," said Deepak Raj, another resident of the area.

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

Garbage is strewn on one part of the road; the other part is cemented poorly, causing damage to vehicles

DID YOU KNOW?

The tradition of celebrating Easter in Bengaluru is almost as old as time itself. With preparations in full swing at all the city's churches, the St Mark's Cathedral stands out for its beautiful English Baroque architecture inspired by the 17th century St Paul's Cathedral, and is one of the oldest churches in the city.

The cathedral is a beautiful colonial style, modeled on the lines of the St Paul's Cathedral, London, with a dome, semi-circular chancel and Roman arches. The marble pulpit was created out by M/s Snaize & Co., and Bishop Tubbs of Palayamkottai was the first to preach on the marble pulpit on July 1, 1928, delivering the sermon 'The reunion of Christendom'.

The Brass lectern (eagle with spread wings on the globe) was presented by some planters of Mysore in 1903, in memory of Harry Alexander Campbell and Montague Beaden Follett of Lumsden's Horse Regiment who died in the Boer conflicts of South Africa.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

What are some environmental conservation steps you think everyone must take up?

Shivakumar Devan, BM reader

Walk and cycle instead of using vehicles for short distances. Keep a cloth bag in your backpack; helps reduce use of polythene bags. Inform shopkeepers, restaurants that you do not want straws if you don't use one.

Shalini Sundaram, Architect

Choose natural ventilation to use less electricity. Upgrade to low-water consumption taps, flushes. Segregation of waste is a must. Carry a bottle so you can fill it with water and reduce plastic. Recycle paper at work.

Arvind Dwarakanath Techie

Take up sustainable commuting. Plant trees and make a conscious effort to preserve those around you. Consciously use less plastic. Switch off lights when you don't need them. Preserve water. Maintain the roads and the city like you would maintain your home and prayer room.

Pramod Jayaprakash BM reader

Think about where an item came from and where it would end up. Tissue paper could be avoided by carrying a handkerchief. Avoiding use of paper cups for tea/ coffee at restaurants/ stalls.

Damodar Nayak, CA

Avoid plastics as much as possible, avoid car ACs when weather is pleasant as it leads to global warming. Recycle wet waste at home and use manure for gardening. Plant more trees, replace petrol, diesel vehicles with electric vehicles. Practice water harvesting and treat used water for gardening and washing.

SPEAK TO US

With power cuts happening frequently, what measures should the government adopt to solve this problem?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com or WhatsApp us on 9591233247

THE SUNDAY READ

Lightning crashes

As the skies open, here is a grim reminder that the number of deaths due to lightning has been on a steady rise in the state

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of deaths	37	33	38	79	72	59	96	118	101	79	100

Garima Prasher
mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com
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At least 812 people died due to lightning in Karnataka between 2011 and 2021 as per a report by the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre (KSNDMC). The data furnished in the report also points to an increase in the number of deaths over the last few years. While 79 people had died as per the records in 2020 due to lightning strikes, the number went up to 100 in 2021.

A quick scan of the data shows that the numbers have gone up in the last five years. While 259 deaths were recorded between 2011 and 2015, this number went up to 553 between 2016 and 2021.

According to Dr Manoj Rajan, commissioner, Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA), the higher number of deaths can be attributed to the rise in thunderstorms and lightning events.

"The rising global temperature and climate change causes an increase in the severity and frequency of every kind of extreme event such as heavy rainfall, lightning, cyclones, etc. Moreover, these events are further expected to rise in the years ahead, leading to a further increase in the number of such incidents," said Dr Rajan.

As many as 2,36,951 lightning events were recorded in 2021 in Karnataka. However, an increase in mortality rate despite KSNDMC's location-specific early warning system in place is a reason for concern.

As of now, KSNDMC's warning system can detect these events 30 minutes in advance to inform the public across the state. This is achieved through a network of lightning detection sensor stations that provide real-time data about the thunderstorm and lightning. Early warnings and advisories are being generated and disseminated to the public based on this data.

"The lightning and thunderstorm can be detected at least 30 minutes in advance with the current monitoring system. We identify the areas where the lightning is going to strike and start sending messages on the registered mobile numbers. However, last-mile connectivity is an issue we have been facing. Moreover, we have not been able to study the impact of our forecast system so far. The number will surely be higher in the absence of these systems," informed a KSNDMC official.

While lightning deaths were spread across all the districts of the state, with over 85 deaths in 10 years, Belagavi in North Karnataka is the worst affected among all the districts followed up by Vijaypura (69), Gadag (56), Chitradurga (48) and Tumakuru (48).

Disaster Early Warning System (DEWS)

KSDMA, to bring down the number of deaths due to lightning and other extreme weather events, has now come up with a centralised wireless public broadcasting system called Disaster Early Warning System (DEWS) at vulnerable gram panchayats across three districts in Karnataka.

"It is the farmers who are mostly at the receiving end of such events. While we have been reaching out to them through phone calls, text messages and the Sidulu app, last-mile connectivity was always a concern as the farmers do not carry mobile phones to the farms. DEWS is expected to resolve this issue," said Dr Rajan.

KSNDMC, after receiving an alert through its location-specific warning system, will now be able to broadcast an audio message at the concerned gram panchayats within a few seconds. The system has an operational radius of one and a half kilometres.

"We are using technology to send out alert messages to the areas within a fraction of a second. It is a multi-hazard and multi-lingual early warning system. The message will be immediately read out loud at the gram panchayat offices and thus people within a one-and-a-half-kilometre radius will be alerted in no time. It will also sound a siren along with a pre-recorded message on the dos and don'ts to follow," informed Dr Rajan.

According to KSNDMA, as many as 105 such systems have been put up in Bagalkot, Belagavi and Raichur districts.

"These three districts were picked as they are highly susceptible to extreme weather events. We have recently installed the system and are currently educating people on how to interpret and use these alert messages. The messages can be played for lightning strikes, heavy rainfall events, drought, heatwaves, etc. We will use the system for a few months, and it will be replicated across the state if desired results are produced," said Dr Rajan.

> **"The rising global temperature and climate change causes an increase in the severity and frequency of every kind of extreme event such as heavy rainfall, lightning, cyclones and so on** – Dr Manoj Ranjan, commissioner, KSDMA

Get forest produce at doorstep in Mysuru

On a trial basis, eight stalls will operate at Chamundi hills, palace grounds

Prakash VL
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Now you can get forest products directly delivered to your house in Mysuru. An initiative to create a proper market for forest products is successful for now, in its trial run.

To provide forest produce at a fair price and to reach the customers, Karnataka State Lamps Co-Operative Federation Ltd is initiating this unique experience. It is now opening outlets for selling forest produce. On a trial basis, it is now opening eight stalls including at Chamundi hills, palace grounds and KSRTC bus stand.

The mobile van outlets will sell more than 15 products and value-added by-products of the forest. The proposal for starting outlets is under process.

The mobile van outlets (inset) are going to sell more than 15 products and value-added by-products of the forest such as honey

> **We will start the outlets to sell products from people of tribal communities and to create a demand for forest produce**
>
> –GR Vijaykumar, Karnataka State Lamps Co-op Fed eration Ltd

The tribal people are selling the forest products to the federation. Sometimes, the middlemen purchase the products in the auction and sell them in other places for profit. To make the forest products directly available for the customer, the federation started the outlets and mobile vans. There are some self-help groups also producing some products with value addition for forest products. More than 50 such products will be sold in the outlets.

The Managing Director of Karnataka State Lamps Co-Operative Federation Ltd GR Vijaykumar said, "We have decided to start the outlets for selling the products from tribal people and to create the demand of forest produces. Along with this, we are also selling the products through mobile shops. These shops will be expanded to other districts too."

A mobile van selling forest products started selling in Mysuru city on a trial basis. The mobile van stalls one lakh of business in a week. The forest products are stored in the office of Karnataka State Lamps Co-Operative Federation Ltd in Hebbalu.

The mobile van consists of honey, Indian gooseberry, soapnut powder, algae, wax, gum, rampatre and other products.

'IISc's 'warm' vax effective against Delta'

A heat-stable covid-19 vaccine that is being developed in India and does not need cold chain storage has generated a strong antibody response against coronavirus variants, including Delta and Omicron, according to a study on mice conducted by a team from IISc.

The vaccine candidate, by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru and biotech start-up company Mynvax, uses a part of the viral spike protein called the receptor-binding domain (RBD), which allows the virus to connect with the host cell to infect it.

The team, including researchers from Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), noted that most vaccines require refrigeration to remain effective.

The heat-tolerant covid-19 vaccine candidate can be stored at 37 degrees Celsius for four weeks and at 100 degrees Celsius for up to 90 minutes.

> **As per the study conducted by IISc, the heat-tolerant covid-19 vaccine candidate can be stored at 37 degrees Celsius for four weeks and at 100 degrees Celsius for up to 90 minutes**

In comparison, the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India, must be kept between 2-8 degrees Celsius and the Pfizer preventive requires specialised cold storage at minus 70 degrees Celsius.

The latest study, published recently in the journal Viruses, assessed vaccinated mice sera (blood samples) for efficacy against key coronavirus variants, including Delta and Omicron.

The study found that mice immunised with different formulations of the vaccine elicit high titers (unit to measure amount or concentration) of antibodies that neutralise SARS-CoV-2 variants VIC31 (reference strain), Delta and Omicron variants of coronavirus.

Compared to VIC31, there was an average 14.4-fold reduction in neutralisation against the Omicron variant for one formulation of the Mynvax vaccine and a 16.5-fold reduction for another formulation.

The corresponding values for reduction in neutralisation against Delta variant were 2.5 and 3, according to the researchers.

"The average 14.4- or 16.5-fold reduction in neutralisation against Omicron BA.1.1 for the monomeric and trimeric formulations, respectively, compares favourably with equivalent reductions observed with leading covid-19 vaccines," the authors of the study noted.

"Our findings suggest that monomeric formulations are suitable for upcoming Phase I human clinical trials and that there is potential for increasing the efficacy with vaccine matching to improve the responses against emerging variants," they wrote in the journal.

Monomeric and trimeric formulations refer to different shapes and combinations that can be used to develop the vaccine.

CSIRO's evaluation of the different Mynvax formulations will support the selection of the most suitable candidate and dosage for planned human clinical trials in India.

The heat tolerance of the vaccine and its ability to withstand transient thermal shocks is particularly promising to address the vaccine inequity that affects most low- and lower-middle-income countries, the researchers added.

Over 10 billion doses of covid-19 vaccines have been administered globally and 51 countries have reached more than 70 per cent of their population.

However, this is only 11 per cent in low-income countries. **–PTI**

CM says no meddling in contractor's death probe

Accusing the opposition Congress of wanting to be investigator, prosecutor and judge in the case relating to civil contractor Santosh Patil's death, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday dismissed allegations of interference by his government in the investigation.

Following a political furore that erupted on the issue, senior BJP leader K S Eshwarappa, against whom police have booked a case of abetment to suicide, submitted his resignation as the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister on Friday night. "Santosh Patil's suicide is being investigated, postmortem has been done, FSL (forensic science laboratory) report will come. On the basis of it, what has happened will be scientifically known," Bommai said in response to Congress' questioning, as to why Eshwarappa has not been booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, he recalled that during Siddaramaiah-led Congress government's tenure in KJ George (former Minister) case, the police, despite having video allegations against him and the death note, did not mention his name in the FIR, and there was an attempt to shut the case. **– PTI**

KSE to skip BJP executive meet

Senior Karnataka BJP leader K S Eshwarappa, who has resigned as Minister following allegations of abetting the suicide of a civil contractor, on Saturday said he will not be attending the party's two-day state executive meeting in Hospet, citing personal reasons. The ruling BJP state executive meeting is being held at Hospet in Vijayanagara district, which is scheduled to be attended by BJP national President J P Nadda on Sunday. On his next responsibility or course of action, post resignation as the Minister, he said he will abide by the party's decision as done in the past. "There are several programmes relating to my grandson's marriage that are on at our house, so I will not be going (for the state executive meeting). I have conveyed it to BJP state President Nalin Kumar Kateel and CM Basavaraj Bommai," Eshwarappa said.

TRACKING IPL 2022

Glenn Maxwell of Royal Challengers Bangalore plays a shot during the IPL match between Delhi Capitals and RCB, at the Wankhede Stadium, in Mumbai on Saturday. RCB managed to rustle up 189 runs after batting first. Earlier in the day, former cricketer and men's team head coach Ravi Shastri said that RCB are getting better with every game and are capable of making it to the playoffs in IPL 2022

IPL CLOSING CEREMONY TO BE GRAND?

BCCI invites bids for staging ceremony through tender process

#Mumbai

The BCCI has invited bids from reputed entities for staging the closing ceremony of Indian Premier League 2022 through a tender process.

"The detailed terms and conditions governing the tender process including eligibility requirements, the process for submissions of bids, rights and obligations, etc. are contained in the 'Request for Proposal' ("RFP") which will be made available on receipt of payment of a non-refundable fee of INR 1,00,000 (Indian Rupees One Lakh Only) plus any applicable Goods and Services Tax. The procedure to procure the RFP documents is enlisted in Annexure A to this document. The RFP will be available for purchase till April 25," the BCCI release said.

IPL hasn't had an opening or a closing ceremony since the 2019 edition as the 2020 and 2021 editions were a closed-door affair without spectators or with a limited crowd due to the COVID pandemic.

The IPL 2022 league matches are being played only in Maharashtra with Mumbai and Pune being host cities. Due to COVID restrictions, the spectators are allowed in a limited capacity inside the stadium. The play-off dates are yet to be finalized. **ANI**

Bangladeshi man sneaks into India for IPL, sent back

#Kolkata

"Cricket has no boundaries!" The saying was proved right by a 31-year-old Bangladeshi man who sneaked into India to watch Indian Premier League (IPL) matches.

Md Ibrahim, a resident of Purva Chandpur in Narayanganj district of Bangladesh, was apprehended on Friday night near the International Border in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas, the BSF said. "During interrogation, he revealed that he is a cricket fan and was going to Mumbai to watch IPL matches," a BSF official said.

"He gave 5,000 Bangladeshi Taka to a broker for crossing the international boundary," the official said. The man was handed over to the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) as a goodwill gesture, he said. **PTI**

KL Rahul becomes 2nd player to score century

#Mumbai

Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul became the second player to slam a stunning century in IPL 2022 against Mumbai Indians here at Brabourne Stadium here on Saturday.

The LSG skipper was able to bring up his century in just 56 balls with the help of nine fours and five sixes. KL Rahul played 60 balls in his innings and scored 103 runs. This is the highest score of this IPL so far. Rajasthan Royals opener Jos Buttler scored the first hundred of IPL 2022 against Mumbai Indians. Both centuries of this season came against Mumbai Indians.

In the match, KL Rahul's unbeaten knock of 103 guided Lucknow Super Giants to a comfortable 18 runs win over Mumbai Indians in their IPL 2022 match at Brabourne Stadium here on Saturday.

This is Mumbai Indians' sixth successive loss in the Indian Premier League 2022 while for newcomers Lucknow Super Giants, this is their fourth win in the season.

Flexing muscles post pandemic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and near party offices at each of the constituencies in the city.

"We have instructed our men to first identify such hoardings/flex boards and then bring them to the notice of the civic authorities. We would wait for a couple of days and if those are not removed, then we are ourselves getting it removed," said deputy commissioner of police of west traffic division Kuldeep Kumar Jain.

"Local leaders put up their own flex boards and whenever our men (BTP) question them, they pass the blame on to their fans and followers saying they have done it and that was without their knowledge. However, when the fans and followers are questioned, they tell the cops that their leaders want their faces to be known and familiar to the leaders of the party whenever they travel by that route," another senior officer added.

Besides hoardings and flexes wishing birthdays for politicians, there are several hoardings of advertisements such as of gymnasiums and schools. "These businesses have been picking up after a long time of pandemic restrictions," another traffic police officer said.

"It is the responsibility of the civic authority to keep a check on illegal hoardings and flex boards in the city, and the authority has a task force empowered to file cases against offenders and even penalise them if found violating repeatedly. City traffic police now have taken it upon themselves to remove them," the officer said.

On Wednesday, Kamakshipalya traffic police conducted a drive and removed numerous hoardings and flex boards in their jurisdiction. They removed most of the flexes that were hampering or blocking visibility of traffic infrastructure.

In September 2019, a software engineer in Chennai was run over by a truck after a hoarding fell on her while riding a scooter. The unfortunate accident was caught on CCTV. Soon after the incident, many civic agencies started to initiate strict action against offenders who were responsible for putting up or installing hoardings and flex boards.

"It's certainly a hurdle for us; but we cannot wait for something to happen to commuters like it happened in Chennai. So we have directed our men to keep a tab on hoardings and flexes," Jain added.

Karnataka, M'rashtra, Haryana, TN in hockey senior national tourney

Hockey Haryana Vs Hockey Association of Odisha

#Bhopal

The 12th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2022 saw thrilling Quarter-Final hockey matches as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Haryana and Unit of Tamil Nadu registered wins to enter the semi-final.

In the first game of the day, Hockey Karnataka faced off against Hockey Bengal in a closely-contested affair. Harish Mutagar (24') opened the scoring for Hockey Karnataka, after which Deekshith S P (34') and Yathish Kumar B (41') scored one goal each to take their lead to 3-0.

But Amon Mirash Tirkey (47'), Captain Kishor Lakra (55'), and Tarun Adhikari (57') scored quick goals to level the score. Deekshith S P (59') scored the winner in the final minute of the match to help Hockey Karnataka win the match 4-3. **ANI**

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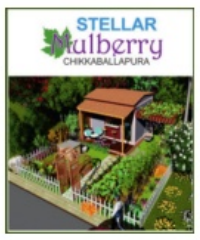

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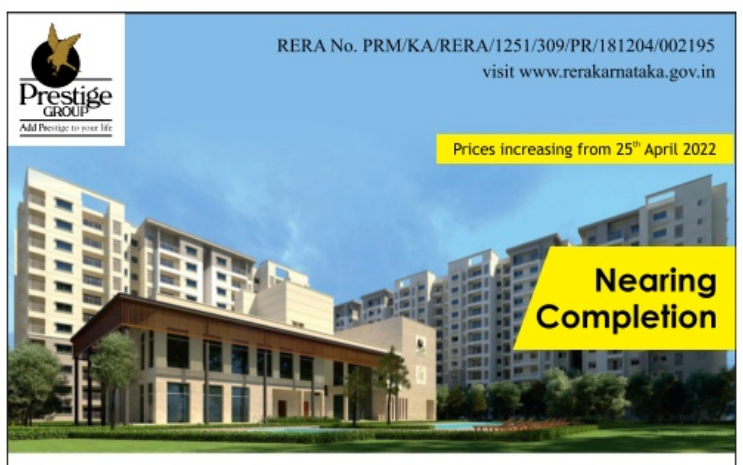

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I, Kamaliya Dev W/O Abhishek Deshmukh R/O Thirumala Paradise, Flat #B4 1st Main, 6th Cross PWD Road, Akash Nagar, A Narayanpura, Bangalore-560016 have changed my name to Kameliya Deshmukh.

I, Bilkisbai Shahpurwala W/o Abbas Salehbhai Shahpurwala R/o # 302 J S J Opal 3rd Floor Bhel Official Layout Jayanagar Bengaluru 560041 have change my name to Bilkis Abbas Shahpurwala for all purposes

I Nirupama Hegde W/o Karunakara Angalli Hegde R/o 45, 2nd Main, Dollars Colony, J.P. Nagar 4th Phase, Bengaluru 560078 have changed my name to Brahmavar Nirupama Karunakara Hegde for all purposes.

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Withdraw lookout notice: Court to CBI
A Sessions court of Delhi upheld a magistrate court order setting aside a Lookout Order (LOC) issued against former Amnesty Chief Aakar Patel

BangaloreMirror | 12
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Bypolls: TMC, Cong, RJD win; BJP draws blank

#Kolkata/Kolhapur
The Trinamool Congress on Saturday made a clean sweep winning both the Asansol Lok Sabha and the Ballygunge assembly seats in West Bengal while the Congress and the RJD bagged one constituency each in Maharashtra and Bihar in the bypolls to these seats with the BJP drawing a blank.

Congress candidate Yashoda Verma was maintaining a lead over Komal Janghel of the BJP in the Khairagarh assembly in Chhattisgarh where counting was underway.

In West Bengal, actor-turned politician Shatrughan Sinha of the TMC defeated BJP's Agnimitra Paul by 3,03,209 votes in Asansol. The BJP had won the seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls by 1.97 lakh votes when Babul Supriyo who was then in the BJP beat TMC's Moon Moon Sen.

Supriyo, who was nominated by the TMC from the prestigious Ballygunge assembly constituency, defeated CPI(M)'s Saira Shah Halim by a margin of 20,228 votes. BJP's Keya Ghosh managed to bag just 13,220 votes.

The bypoll, which took place on April 12, was necessitated as state minister Subrata Mukherjee, who represented Ballygunge, died last year. West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee thanked voters of Asansol and Ballygunge for giving a decisive mandate to the TMC candidates. In Asansol, 'Shotgun' Sinha said he was "grateful to Asansol's people and to Mamata Banerjee for this victory."

TMC supporters celebrate the party's victory in the Ballygunge bypolls on Saturday

BJP state president Sukanta Majumdar said it is a general trend that the party in power in the state generally wins the by-elections.

In a boost to the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) combine in Maharashtra, the Congress won the bypoll to the Kolhapur North assembly constituency, retaining the seat by defeating the BJP by a margin of over 18,000 votes. Congress-MVA candidate Jayashri Jadhav bagged 96,176 votes, while BJP's Satyajeet Kadam polled 77,426 votes.

The by-election was necessitated because of the death of sitting Congress MLA Chandrakant Jadhav due to Covid in December 2021. Jadhav thanked the voters and said all three constituents of the MVA worked together to clinch victory. The opposition RJD in Bihar wrested the Bochahan assembly seat from the ruling NDA, with its candidate defeating the BJP nominee by a big margin of over 35,000 votes. **PTI**

Communal violence & PM Modi's silence leaves Oppn shocked

#New Delhi
Leaders of 13 Opposition political parties on Saturday expressed deep concern over the recent incidents of hate speech and communal violence in the country, and urged people to maintain peace and harmony.

In a joint statement, the leaders including Congress president Sonia Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and her Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand counterparts M K Stalin and Hemant Soren, also raised concern over the manner in which issues relating to food, dress, faith, festivals and language "are being used" by the ruling establishment to polarise society.

"We are shocked at the silence of the Prime Minister, who has failed to speak against the words and actions of those who propagate bigotry and those who, by their words and actions, incite and provoke our society. This silence is an eloquent testimony to the fact that such private armed mobs enjoy the luxury of official patronage," they said in the joint statement.

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee visits Kalighat Temple on Thursday; File photo of Sonia Gandhi with DMK leader MK Stalin (right)

Reiterating their collective resolve to work together to strengthen the bonds of social harmony that "defined and enriched India for centuries", the Opposition leaders said, "We reiterate our commitment to combat and confront the poisonous ideologies which are attempting to entrench divisiveness in our society." "We appeal to all sections of the people to maintain peace and foil the sinister objective of those who wish to sharpen communal polarisation. We call upon all our party units across the country to independently and jointly work for maintaining peace and harmony," they said in the joint appeal.

Incidents of communal violence were reported from some parts of the country on the occassion of Ram Navami on April 10. **PTI**

300 units free power every month in Punjab

#Chandigarh
The Punjab government Saturday announced 300 units of free power for households in the state every month from July 1, but with a caveat that they will have to pay the full bill if their usage exceeds 600 units in two months.

However, scheduled castes, backward castes, below-poverty-line households and freedom fighters will be charged just for the usage over and above 600 units. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann made the announcement here on Saturday, fulfilling one of the key poll promises of the Aam Aadmi Party.

The party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal had promised free electricity up to 300 units for the state during his election campaign in June last year. The move will put an estimated additional burden of Rs 5,000 crore on the state exchequer.

AAP said the scheme will benefit 80 per cent of domestic category consumers in the state. "From July 1, 2022, each household in Punjab will get free electricity of 300 units per month. And it will be 600 units for two months," the chief minister said in a video message on Saturday. Mann said if electricity consumption exceeds 600 units in two months, then a consumer will have to pay for the entire power usage. **PTI**

Prashant Kishor presents roadmap for 2024 to Cong

#New Delhi
Political strategist Prashant Kishor on Saturday presented a detailed roadmap for the 2024 elections before Congress interim President Sonia Gandhi and party's top leaders.

After the presentation, Sonia Gandhi set up a committee to look into the suggestions.

"Prashant Kishor has given a detailed presentation for the 2024 election and Congress president has deputed a small group to look into it and report to her within a week and after that a final decision will be taken," General Secretary organisation K.C. Venugopal said.

Sources said Kishor said during the meeting the Congress party must target up to 400 seats out of 543 for 2024 and work on alliances wherever the party was weak.

Sources also said that Kishor is likely to join the Congress formally soon.

Prashant Kishor

Earlier the meeting, called by Sonia Gandhi to discuss issues related to 'Chintan Shivir' and upcoming polls, was attended by party's senior leaders -- Ambika Soni, Digvijaya Singh, Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and Ajay Maken. The meeting lasted for more than two hours and political strategist Prashant Kishor exited from the backdoor after giving the presentation. **IANS**

Rising Covid cases causing anxiety among Delhi traders

#New Delhi
With Covid cases witnessing a rise in the national capital, traders and business owners are apprehensive that their pandemic-hit businesses might be engulfed in another wave even before recovering from losses of over the past two years.

The businessmen are hoping that the Delhi government won't impose any kind of restrictions on their businesses.

Delhi on Friday recorded 366 fresh Covid-19 cases and zero death, while the positivity rate rose further to 3.95 per cent, according to data shared by the city health department.

The rising cases have caused concerns among the traders and businessmen that restrictions might be imposed. A meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has been called on April 20 to review the situation in the national capital.

Atul Bhargava, president of the National Delhi Trade Association, expressed concern that the new surge will pour cold water on the hopes of reviving businesses.

Tourists visit the Red Fort on a hot summer day, amid a slight surge in coronavirus cases, in New Delhi on Saturday

"With much difficulty, things are getting back to place and if this happens again then you know. It will be really bad for the economy and for the business, country and traders," he said. **PTI**

HEALTH TIP: Taking the stairs instead of the elevator increases your heart rate, helps with balance, and improves lower-extremity strength

Because each large egg contains less than 1 gram of carbs and about 6 grams of protein, eggs can be ideal for keto

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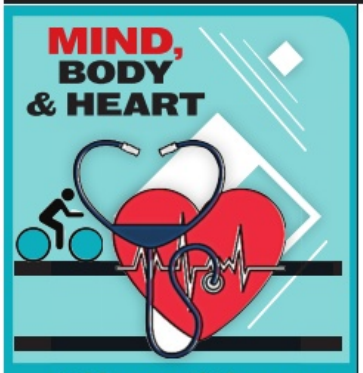


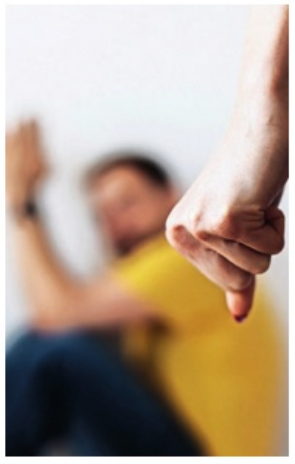
All problems solved

Dear Coleen

I don't know how to tell my girlfriend that I want to leave her. I'm really worried she'll go crazy and start screaming and chucking stuff at me.
She has a very short temper, which is the main reason I want out. She's angry all the time, jealous and possessive, and I'm unhappy.
It takes nothing for her to fly off the handle and I spend most days walking on eggshells.
I don't want to take the coward's way out by sending her an email or calling her, even though that's what I'd like to do.
I just know she won't listen to reason and as soon as I start talking, she'll blame me.

COLEEN SAYS

I feel nervous for you. Well, you could start talking and as soon as she blows up, walk out and say you'll come back and speak to her when she's calmed down, adding this is the reason you don't want to be in a relationship with her.
You don't have to stay and listen if she is being verbally or physically abusive.
Alternatively, you could send her an email, giving your reasons and explain why you didn't want to tell her face-to-face, but say you're willing to talk if she wants to. But perhaps meet in a public place so she needs to observe some boundaries.
You certainly should not stay in a relationship where you're walking on eggshells and afraid to be yourself.
—Coleen Nolan, Daily Mirror



EASTER CLASSICS

No Easter festivity is complete without these classic recipes. Plate them up for a memorable meal

SHEPHERD'S PIE

INGREDIENTS
- Lamb mince: 250 gm
- Chopped onion: 50 gm
- Frozen peas: 50 gm
- Chopped carrot: 50 gm
- Chopped leeks: 50 gm
- Salt: to taste
- Crushed pepper: A pinch
- Tomato puree: 100 ml

Prep Time: 15 min **Cooking Time:** 30 min **Serves** 4

- Potato: 4
- Fresh thyme: 1 sprig
- Fresh rosemary: 1 sprig
- Olive oil: 100 ml
- Chopped garlic: 30 gm
- Chopped celery: 50 gm
- Parmesan cheese: 50 gm

METHOD
- Take a heavy-bottomed pan and heat olive oil. Sweat the onion and garlic. Once ready, add carrot, peas, leeks, celery, and cook for a while. And then, add minced lamb. Roast till it turns brown. Add tomato puree and cook for at least five minutes. Finish with thyme, rosemary, and seasoning. Meanwhile make mashed potato and keep it aside. Transfer the lamb mixer into a serving bowl. And spread the mashed potato on top of the lamb mixer. Gratinate it under the salamander and serve hot.

EASTER HOT CROSS BUNS

INGREDIENTS
- Milk: 220 ml
- Yeast: 100 gm
- Sugar: 100 gm
- Raisins: 100 gm
- Orange juice: 50 gm
- All-purpose flour: 450 gm
- Cinnamon powder: 5 gm
- All spice: 2 gm
- Nutmeg: 2 gm
- Salt: To taste
- Egg: 1
- Vanilla essence: 10 ml
- Butter: 50 gm
- Orange zest: 1

Prep Time: 2 hours **Cooking Time:** 15-20 min **Serves** 10

METHOD
- Combine milk, sugar, yeast and keep aside. Soak the raisins with orange juice and keep it aside. Combine flour, salt, cinnamon powder and all spice powder. Add egg, butter, orange zest and mix it with flour mix. Add milk, sugar yeast mixer. Add raisins to the flour mix and make a dough and leave it for proving for at least 10 minutes. After proving, divide it into equal portions, at least 50 gm each.

For the flour cross:
- Make a mix of 50 gm of milk and 50 gm flour and make a cross with dough. Sprinkle some caster sugar on top of the cross. Bake it at 180 degree Celsius for at least 15 to 20 minutes.

CHICKEN MADEIRA

INGREDIENTS
- Chicken breast: 2
- Chopped garlic: 30 gm
- Fresh thyme: 1 sprig
- Salt: To taste
- Crushed black pepper: A pinch
- Chopped onion: 50 gm
- Asparagus: 100 gm
- Madeira wine: 150 ml
- Mushroom: 50 gm
- Butter: 100 gm
- Cream: 50 ml
- Mozzarella cheese: 50 gm
- Olive oil: 100 ml

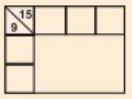
Prep Time: 20 min **Cooking Time:** 20 min **Serves** 2

METHOD
- Season the chicken breast with salt, pepper, thyme, olive oil and keep it aside. Take a non-stick pan, add butter and olive oil once it's hot, and sear the chicken. Roast it in an oven for at least five minutes at a temperature of 150 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, sauté the mushrooms and asparagus and season them with salt and pepper. Place the mushrooms and asparagus on the dinner plate and assemble the cooked chicken on the top of asparagus. Make a sauce with chopped onion, chopped garlic, madeira wine, cream, and cheese. Pour it on top of the chicken and serve it hot.

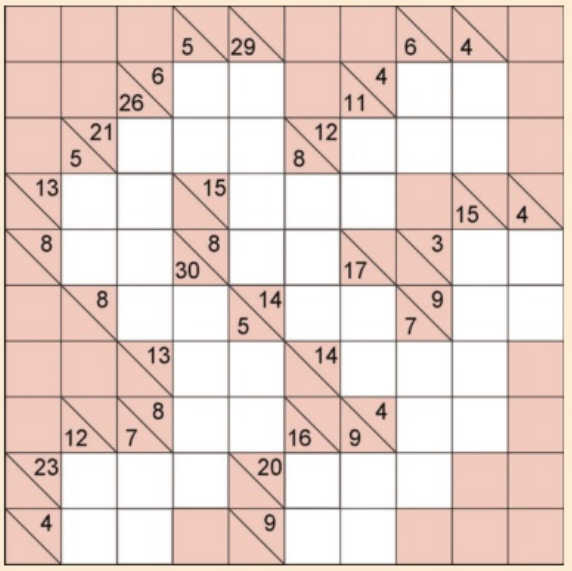
By Chef Muthamizhan, Executive Chef, Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore

Kakuro

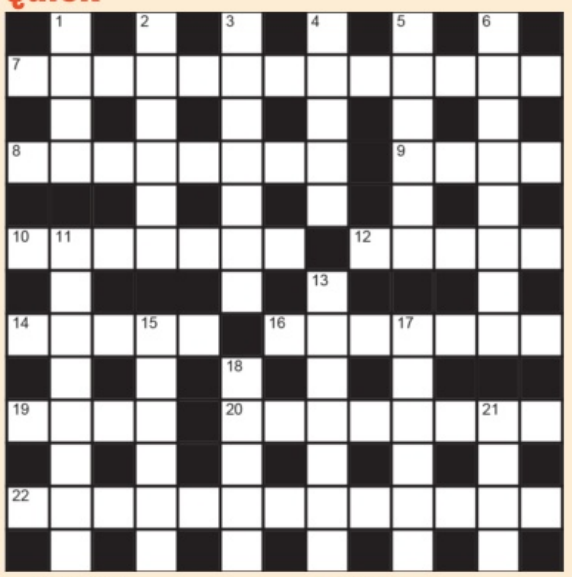
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Foods rich in sugars and starches (13)
8 Battle, conflict or skirmish (8)
9 Select (4)
10 Grade or level (7)
12 A vain hope (5)
14 Burial places (5)
16 What one visits online (3-4)
19 Footnote note? (4)
20 North Eastern state-capital Kohima (8)
22 Top political post in most democracies (5,8)

DOWN

1 Quick or speedy (4)
2 Blunt, intellectually dull (6)
3 Hair roll (7)
4 Totted up (5)
5 City in centre of India (6)
6 Retailer (8)
11 Beats very convincingly (8)
13 ___ it : walking or running, informally speaking? (7)
15 Karnataka tourist destination known for its sculptures and red sandstone cliffs (6)
17 Spatter with water (6)
18 Rival (5)
21 Poverty or want (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: A EQUALS P

BN FSNVEJNZDBPF NL NESHV AHNAWH JIRFH RF EN GH ZNVH DBENWHVIBE ESIB ESNFH OSDJS IVH JIVDJIERVHF NL NRV NOB.

Linemaro

Didn't I see you at the gym? You were the gorgeous woman everyone kept looking at!

Mindchow

The eloquent man is he who is no beautiful speaker, but who is inwardly and desperately drunk with a certain belief

Joke of the day

I still miss my ex. But my aim is getting better

Loop

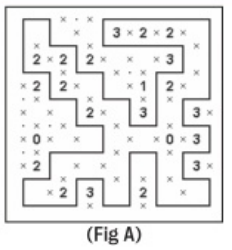
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

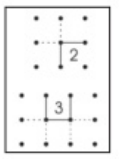
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

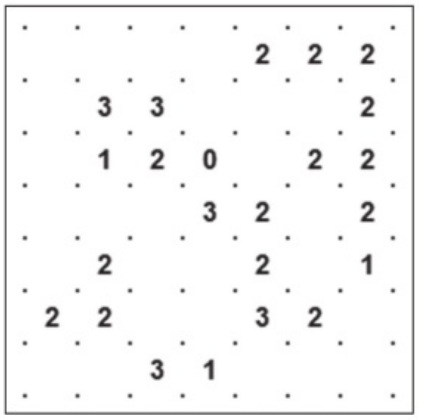
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



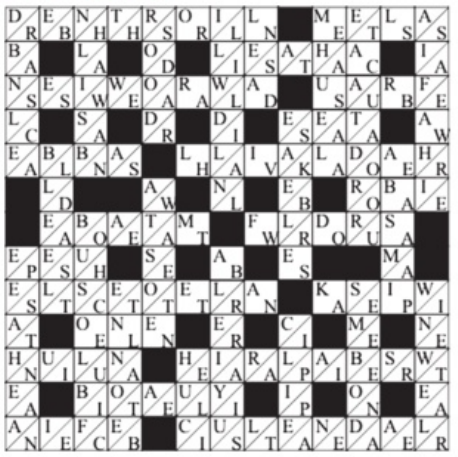
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9		W		

ACROSS

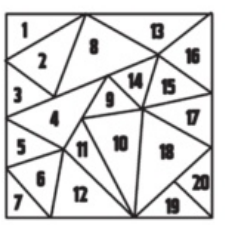
1 Toles; 6 Not ox; 7 Bob at; 8 One so; 9 Or Wed

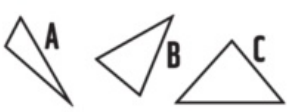
DOWN

1 St Dan; 2 Boo at; 3 Wo box; 4 Oleos; 5 Treen

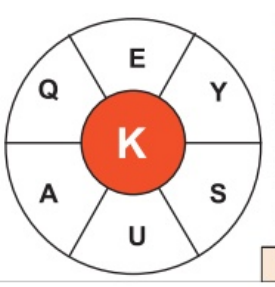
Mensapuzzle

Match the three triangles at the bottom with their numbered counterparts in this square.





Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

6				1	2		7	5
		1				8		6
	2			7			4	
				5		4	9	
			7		4			
	1	3		9				
	6			8			3	
3		2				7		
9	4		3	6				2

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

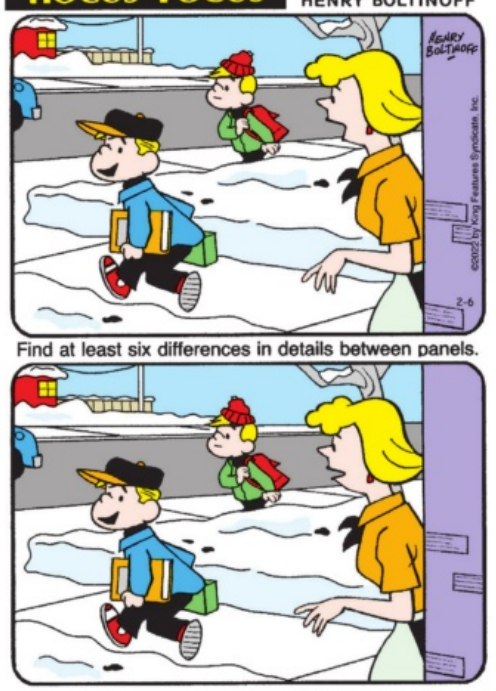
Easy = 1
2 5 6 8

Medium = 6
2 2 3 4

Hard = 20
2 5 8 4

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

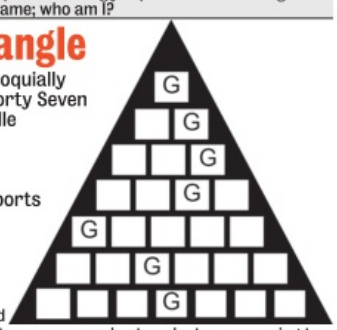
Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Hair is different. 3. Sneaker is different. 4. Hat is reversed. 5. Brick is higher. 6. Mouth is not open as wide

Riddler

I have been called a savage, a chief and oft times a leader. Some have called me the embodiment of courage, although to a Crook I did surrender. Where I was born, there were no enclosures. In the end, to bring me down, it took 5000 soldiers. As the "terror of the country", I had a reputation of cruelty and cunning. My tactics consisted of hitting and then running. Many movies and stories of me were made. The memories of me, the most famous of my people, will never fade. People have spoken ill of me so many times it would give your throat a lump. Yet sometimes, my name is the last word said when people make a big jump. Now it's time to give it a try. Do you know my name; who am I?

Alpha triangle

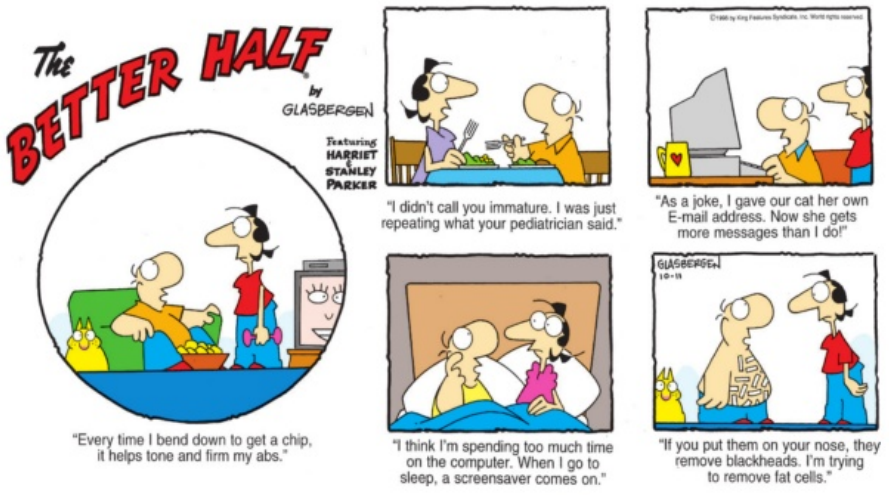
1 One thousand colloquially
2 Atomic number Forty Seven
3 Droop in the middle
4 Drags behind
5 Big blows
6 High flyers
7 Associations of sports teams

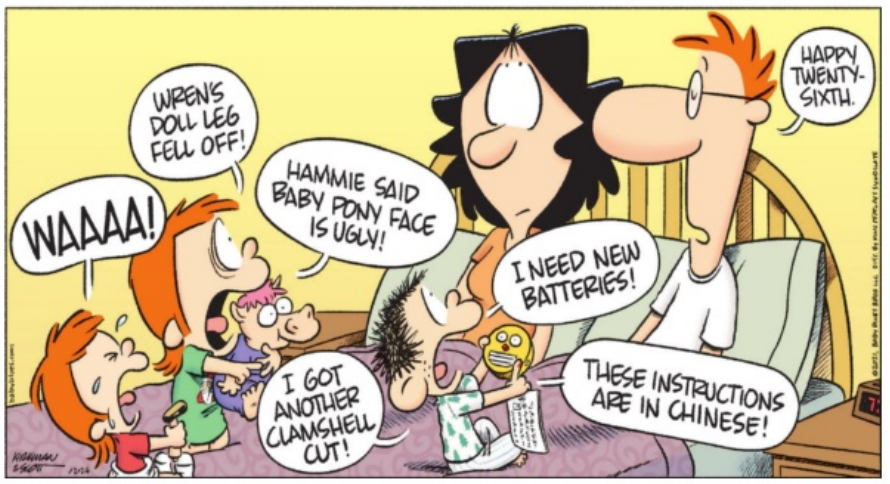


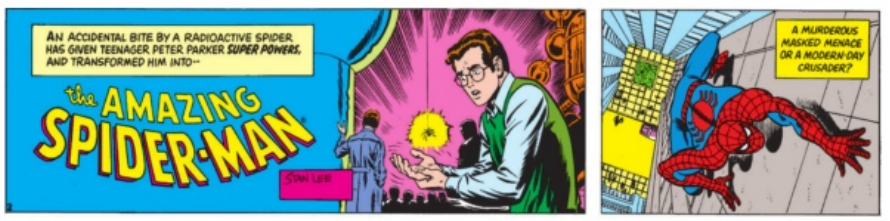
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

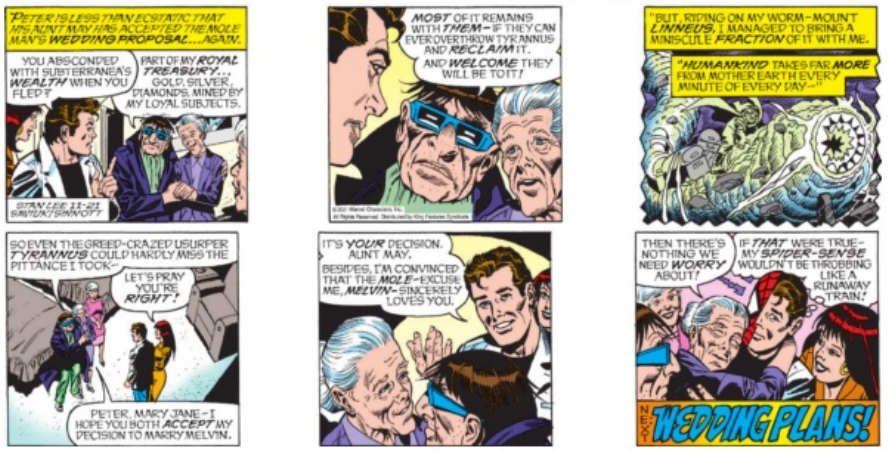
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"Every time I bend down to get a chip, it helps tone and firm my abs."
"I didn't call you immature. I was just repeating what your pediatrician said."
"As a joke, I gave our cat her own E-mail address. Now she gets more messages than I do!"
"I think I'm spending too much time on the computer. When I go to sleep, a screensaver comes on."
"If you put them on your nose, they remove blackheads. I'm trying to remove fat cells."


WREN'S DOLL LEG FELL OFF!
WAAAA!
HAMMIE SAID BABY PONY FACE IS UGLY!
I NEED NEW BATTERIES!
HAPPY TWENTY-SIXTH.
I GOT ANOTHER CLAMSHELL CUT!
THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE IN CHINESE!


AN ACCIDENTAL BITE BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER HAS GIVEN TEENAGER PETER PARKER SUPER POWERS, AND TRANSFORMED HIM INTO--
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
STAN LEE
A MURDEROUS MASKED MENACE OR A MODERN-DAY CRUSADER?


PETER IS LESS THAN ECSTATIC THAT HIS AUNT MAY HAS ACCEPTED THE MOLE MAN'S WEDDING PROPOSAL...AGAIN.
YOU ABSCONDED WITH SUBTERRANEA'S WEALTH WHEN YOU FLED IT
PART OF MY ROYAL TREASURY... GOLD, SILVER, DIAMONDS, MINED BY MY LOYAL SUBJECTS.
MOST OF IT REMAINS WITH THEM -- IF THEY CAN EVER OVERTHROW TYRANNUS AND RECLAIM IT.
AND WELCOME THEY WILL BE TOT!
"BUT, RIDING ON MY WORM-MOUNT LINNEUS, I MANAGED TO BRING A MINISCULE FRACTION OF IT WITH ME.
"HUMANKIND TAKES FAR MORE FROM MOTHER EARTH EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY--"
SO EVEN THE GREED-CRAZED USURPER TYRANNUS COULD HARDLY MISS THE PITTANCE I TOOK--
LET'S PRAY YOU'RE RIGHT!
IT'S YOUR DECISION, AUNT MAY. BESIDES, I'M CONVINCED THAT THE MOLE -- EXCUSE ME, MELVIN -- SINCERELY LOVES YOU.
THEN THERE'S NOTHING WE NEED WORRY ABOUT?
IF THAT WERE TRUE -- MY SPIDER-SENSE WOULDN'T BE THROBBING LIKE A RUNAWAY TRAIN!
PETER, MARY JANE -- I HOPE YOU BOTH ACCEPT MY DECISION TO MARRY MELVIN.
WEDDING PLANS!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
You may feel dull. Control your temper. Your focus will be tested many times, today. But you remain focused on your goals. Do not invest in worthless stuff. Love birds must avoid arguments on worthless topics.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may be happy and enjoy peace. You may be busy with friends and family. You may enjoy your domestic life as your bond with your spouse may improve. You may come across a new partnership opportunity in business. New innovations may help your business grow.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You may begin your day on a positive note. You may be in the winning position against opponents and hidden enemies. Your work may get praised by seniors and you may receive new responsibilities in terms of promotions. Students are blessed by the moon. They may find the right path to choose good career options.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may be busy with family issues and may explore other sources of income. You may take an interest in artefacts, movies or glamour and improve your sense of creativity. Love birds may enjoy clarity in their relationships. Students may focus on their career.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
You may have many options which may make you confuse. You may visit elders and consult them before making any important decisions. Your past experiences may help you make right decisions in terms of work and your domestic life. Be careful regarding your parents' healths.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Business plans may emerge successful with the support of juniors. You may travel for business; the trip may yield benefits in the near future. You may be involved in gatherings; this may boost your social network.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is a good day for gains. You may make good plans to earn profits from your investments. You may save money by avoiding spending on unnecessary stuff. Love birds may be busy in family functions.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Issues related to siblings or relatives are bound to trouble you today. However, at work, you will receive encouragement and support from your peers. Your projects will progress smoothly. You network will also help you complete tasks successfully. You may plan to start a new venture with the help of your siblings or your network. You will be earning tiny profits with little effort.

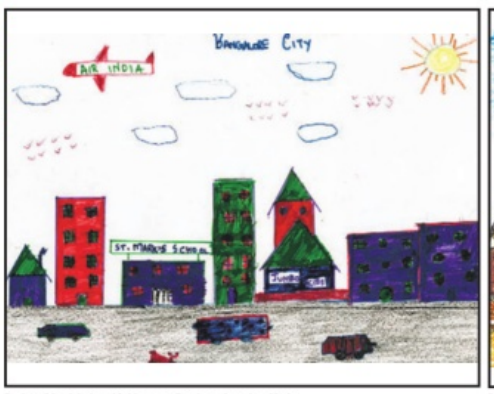
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
You'll feel dull throughout the day. This will affect your health and professional meetings too. You're going to wonder if you're just wasting your time. Late evening onwards, you may feel happy. Be careful while driving and postpone any adventurous tours.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
It's a good day for you. You'll gain new clients on the work front. They'll help you make profits and grow your business. If you're single, today might be the day you find the right one. As far as your domestic life is concerned, avoid keeping secrets from your spouse. Job seekers may find new jobs or get promoted.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Your strong network will help you implement your business plans today. And your wisdom is sure to help you earn profits. You may enjoy domestic harmony and a good understanding with your spouse.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You'll be yielding towards your spiritual calling today. You may want to visit a religious place for peace of mind. Meditate and pray. Pay your tithes in the form of donations or charity. Your community will be supportive financially and may help boost your morale. You can lean on it. You will enjoy today with peace and satisfaction.

KIDZONE



Rohit Maddaly, 10 Years, Podar Jumbo Kids

M Anisha, 9 Years, Kendriya Vidyalaya

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru 560 018; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

QUOTE UNCODE
No shortcomings of other people cause us to be more intolerant than those which are caricatures of our own.

MENSA PUZZLE A11; B2; C8

SOLVE IN 1M **FAST FIVE**
√(1/25) ÷ √(1/100)
= 1/5 ÷ 1/10 = 1/5 x 10/1
= 10/5 = 2

BULL'S EYE
quake, sake, squeak, SQUEAKY

STRIKE OUT

R	E	N	T	R	O	L	L	E	E	L	S			
A	A	O		I	S	A	A	C		A				
N	E	W	S	W	O	R	L	D		S	U	R	F	
C	A		D		I		S	E	A		A			
E	B	B	S		H	A	V	A	L	D	A	R		
L		W		N		B		O	B	I				
A	B	E	A	M		F	L	O	R	A				
P	S	U		S	A		E		M					
E	T	C	E	T	E	R	A		K	E	P	I		
A		O	L	E		R		I		M		N		
H	U	L	A		E	A	R	L	I	E	S	T		
I	B	I		D		N	A	G	A	L	A	N	D	
B		A		E		P								
T	O	M	B	S		W	E	B	S	I	T	E		
L			N			L			N					
E	C	H	E	L	O	N		D	O	R	E	A	M	
S				N		D			U		H			
S	T	R	U	G	G	L	E		P	I	C	K		
S		T		I		D		G		R				
C	A	R	B	O	H	Y	D	R	A	T	E			
F		O		C		A		N		M				

QUICK

S		I		Y		G		H		D				
P	R	I	M	E	M	I	N	I	S	T	E	R		
E		A		E		I		A		E				
I	B	I	D		N	A	G	A	L	A	N	D		
B		A		E		P								
T	O	M	B	S		W	E	B	S	I	T	E		
L			N			L			N					
E	C	H	E	L	O	N		D	O	R	E	A	M	
S				N		D			U		H			
S	T	R	U	G	G	L	E		P	I	C	K		
S		T		I		D		G		R				
C	A	R	B	O	H	Y	D	R	A	T	E			
F		O		C		A		N		M				

RIDDLER
Gerrimo; Geronimo was quoted to have said, "Where I was born, there were no enclosures."
Autoblographers have stated it took more than 5000 soldiers and 500 scouts to capture Geronimo the last time and often referred to him as "the terror of the country". In 1883, Geronimo surrendered to General George Crook.

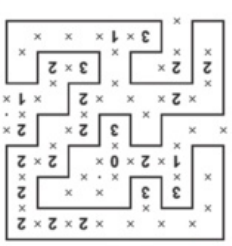
SUDOKU

6	3	4	8	1	2	9	7	5
7	9	1	4	3	5	8	2	6
5	2	8	9	7	6	3	4	1
2	7	6	1	5	3	4	9	8
8	5	9	7	2	4	6	1	3
4	1	3	6	9	8	2	5	7
1	6	7	2	8	9	5	3	4
3	8	2	5	4	1	7	6	9
9	4	5	3	6	7	1	8	2

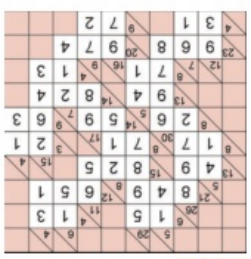
ALPHA TRIANGLE
G, Ag, Sag, Lags, Gales, Eagles, Leagues.

GO FIGURE
Easy
6 – 2 + 5 – 8 = 1
Medium
2 – 3 + 4 x 2 = 6
Hard
5 – 2 x 4 + 8 = 20

LOOP



KAKURO



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 # Burqa gets 3 nominations in NYIFF
Director Sarjun KM's upcoming film, 'Burqa', featuring actors Kalaiarasan and Mirnaa in the lead, has been nominated in three categories at the prestigious New York Indian Film Festival

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A precious couple

Some jaw-dropping figures on what the newly-wed star couple is worth

After dating for five long years and remaining tight-lipped about their relationship for the major part of it, Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt have finally tied the knot in an intimate wedding ceremony on April 14. Twinning in ivory and gold outfits, the newly married couple looked elegant together. While their dreamy pictures have been doing the rounds on social media, we took a look at their combined net worth and it is sure to make your jaw drop!

The intimate wedding

After a star-studded mehendi ceremony on April 13, they had an intimate haldi ceremony on the morning of April 14 before the wedding. Contrary to earlier reports, the couple is not hosting any reception for their Bollywood counterparts. Instead, they have organised a private get-together today.

Alia's net worth

Alia is one of the most talented actors in Bollywood and needless to say, she is also one of the highest-paid ones. She also endorses popular brands for which she reportedly charges Rs 2 crore each.

As far as her properties are concerned, she has an apartment in Juhu, Mumbai where she currently resides with an office next to it. She is also an owner of another apartment which she co-owns with her sister Shaheen Bhatt. Both of them are worth crores of rupees. The 'Raazi' actress purchased a house in London's Covent Garden in 2018 worth about Rs 16 crore. She also started her own production house Eternal Sunshine Productions last year.

Ranbir's net worth

Ranbir, who hails from one of the most illustrious film families in Bollywood, has time and again proved his mettle through his brilliant performances in films like 'Sanju', 'Ae Dil Hai Mushkil' and 'Rockstar'. According to reports, the actor charges about Rs 40-50 crore for playing a lead role. He is also the face of some popular brands for which he apparently charges a whopping of Rs 6 crore each. As far as properties are concerned, he has a house in Mumbai where the marriage ceremony happened. It is one of the prime properties in Mumbai and is worth Rs 30 crore.

Combined net worth

According to a report by Duff and Phelps, Alia had a valuation of Rs 517 crore in 2021. Ranbir, has a net worth of Rs 322 crore. The combined net worth of the newly married couple is sure to blow your mind away. Their valuation, including all their properties, earnings, luxury cars etc is Rs 839 crore.

Upcoming projects

Alia and Ranbir will be sharing the screen space for the first time in Ayan Mukerji's 'Brahmastra'. The film also features Amitabh Bachchan, Nagarjuna Akkineni, and Mouni Roy in key roles. It is slated to hit the theatres on September 9, 2022. Alia has films like Karan Johar's 'Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani' and 'Takht' in her kitty. She also has 'Darlings' with Vijay Verma and Shefali Shah. Ranbir has Luv Ranjan's untitled next with Shraddha Kapoor and 'Shamshera'. He has also been roped in for Sandeep Reddy Vanga's 'Animal' with Anil Kapoor and Bobby Deol. **– ETimes**

Strong Sam

Samantha Ruth Prabhu has been inspiring her social media followers with fitness videos. On Saturday, the actor dropped a video from the gym, which chronicled her intense workout. Sporting lilac athleisure, Samantha attempted a challenging weight lifting workout.

The actor has set her fitness goal for this year, she had captioned the clip, "Strong body, Stronger mind. 2022-23 is going to be the most physically demanding and challenging time for me. Bringing it one step at a time." Last year, Samantha floored fans with her performance in 'The Family Man 2'. And she is now gearing up for another promising Hindi project. Samantha has reportedly signed up to play the lead alongside Varun Dhawan in the Indian version of 'Citadel', which will be helmed by Raj and DK. This show is backed by Avengers fame Russo Brothers and Priyanka Chopra has also shot for the series in UK. Speaking about into OTT, Samantha had earlier told BT, "Because of OTT platforms, risky, unique, varied, interesting and provocative roles have an audience. I believe this has opened up the playfield for actors who were typecast in the past. I was tired of playing the cute girl in every other film, and I believe I am not capable of doing that anymore." **– ETimes**

Batiste to make acting debut in The Color Purple

Jon Batiste performs 'Freedom' at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, April 3, 2022, in Las Vegas

After dominating this year's Grammy Awards with five wins, including album of the year, American musician Jon Batiste is now set to embark on a new journey, acting.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, Batiste is set to make his feature acting debut as he has joined the cast of 'The Color Purple', directed by Blitz Bazawule.

The plot will centre on a woman named Celie Harris and tracks her lifelong struggles as an African American woman living in the South during the early 1900s. Batiste is set to portray Grady, Shug Avery's (played by Taraji P. Henson) husband, a sweet-talking piano man.

The forthcoming Warner Bros. musical movie is an adaptation of Alice Walker's iconic American novel, as well as the Oscar-nominated 1985 film from Steven Spielberg and the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical that it inspired.

Oprah Winfrey, who made her feature acting debut in that movie, will be producing the new project under her Harpo Films banner; Spielberg will also return to produce for his Amblin Entertainment.

Ranveer sets temperature soaring

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh set the temperature soaring through the roof by dropping shirtless pictures of him, displaying his washboard abs.

The 'Padmaavat' actor took to his Instagram handle and posted a series of pictures in which he could be seen showcasing his muscular and chiselled physique.

In the caption, Ranveer just wrote, 'Teaser', which could be a hint for an upcoming project that he might be prepping for. The social media post amassed more than a lakh likes within half an hour of being shared.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Ranveer had recently stated that he doesn't want to get typecast in the industry and among audiences.